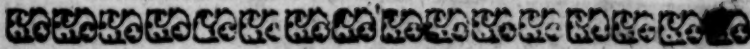


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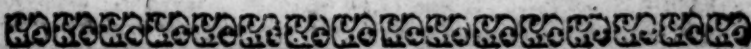
A
SERMON

DELIVER'D in the
ORATORY

BY

Lincoln's - Inn - Fields,

On Sunday, April 26, 1730.



SERMON

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ORATORY

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Lincoln - 1861 - 1862

19 *Sion in Perfect Beauty ;*

OR, THE

Heaven of Heavens: 4

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ON SUNDAY, April 26, 1730.

By *John Henley*, M. A. *K*

Late Rector of Chelmondiston in Suffolk, Lecturer in St. Mary Abchurch, and Assistant Preacher to the Rev. Dr. Burscough, (now Bishop of Limerick) at St. George's, Queen-Square, and now Founder of the ORATORY.

L O N D O N:

Printed by THO. EDLIN, at the *Prince's-Arms*, opposite to *Exeter-Exchange* in the Strand.

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Late Rector of Chelmsford in Suffolk, Lecturer in St. Mary Abchurch, and Assistant Preacher to the Rev. Dr. Hough, (now Bishop of Exeter) at St. George's, Queen's Square, and now Founder of the ORATORY.

LONDON :



Printed by Thomas Baskett, at the Prince's Arms, opposite to St. George's, Queen's Square.

TO THE
TRULY HONOURABLE,
PIOUS *and* CHARITABLE
THE
Lady *HASTINGS*,
OF LEADSTONE,
IN THE
County of *TORK*:
This SERMON
IS DEDICATED
BY

Her LADYSHIP'S *most obedient*

And most humble Servant,

J. Henley.

TO THE
TRULY HONOURABLE,
PIOUS AND CHARITABLE
THE
LADY HASTINGS
OF LEADSTONE,
IN THE
COUNTY OF YORK.
THIS SERMON
IS DEDICATED
BY
Her Ladyship's most obedient
And most humble servant,
J. Henley.



REV. XXI. 10, 11.

—He carry'd me away in the Spirit,
to an high Mountain, and shew'd me
that great City, the Holy Jerusalem,
descending from Heaven;

—Having the Glory of God; and her
Light was like unto a Stone most pre-
cious, even like a Jasper Stone, clear
as Chrystal.



THEY who entertain no Hopes
from the Promises of God find
their Misery in other Delights;
they who are not invited by a
superior Recompence fix their Hearts on
Disappointment, and fill their short Day-
light with Encreasing Disquiet. Be it our

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Good,

Good, our Content, to meditate the Joy
 reserv'd for us, in his Word, who has
 brought Immortality to light by the Gos-
 pel; who is *Tea* and *Amen*; who has left
 us nothing to dispute on a rational footing,
 but much to confide, and to rejoyce with
 Pleasure unspeakable, and full of Glory.

LET none object, that the Description of
 that *Salem* from above, that *Sion* in perfect
 Beauty, the Heaven of Heavens, which
 the Angel of God imparted to the beloved
 Disciple, is an Allegory only, an Emblem,
 to shadow out in Figures and Types the
 Bliss to come. For why should any
 Christian, when his future Advantage is
 represented, plead against himself, and wi-
 ther his own Expectation? Admitting they
 are Emblems, they are Emblems of some-
 thing real; and to contemplate the Divine
 Copy is to discover the main Lines of
 the Original. What is denoted by the
Light clear as Chrystal, the Pavement of
 transparent Gold, and the other bright I-
 mages of the City of God, is not less
 than

than, is at least equal to what will be there, the Inheritance of the Blessed; nay, as the Heavenly surmounts the Earthly, the View of the Heaven of Heavens propos'd under present sensible Objects must be so far from the Romantic and Imaginary, that it must fall short, be inferior to the Truth itself. Heaven is display'd to us under the most advantageous Thoughts and Colours we are capable of conceiving; but they, glorious as they are, the Chrystal River, the Jewels of the Foundation, the Crowns and Tree of Life, and the rest, are not the utmost of the Subject; they are only a faint Echo of that remote Choir; a dim Reflection of that distant Sun in the sully'd Glass of Nature; *but Eye hath not seen, nor Ear heard, neither has it entered into the Heart of Man to conceive the Things that God has prepar'd for them that love Him.*

To explain the Words, Life Everlasting, in the Creed, and Heaven, in its several Meanings, will properly introduce this Description;

scriptions: Most of the Ancient Creeds
 concluded with the Resurrection: (the Per-
 sons crossing themselves sometimes, as Rus-
 sinus and Jerom report, on the Forehead.)
 It was thus in the old *Aquileian, Greek,*
and Roman Creeds. Afterwards, Eternal
 Life, or Life Everlasting, was added. And
 the Apostle, in those Words, *If by any*
Means I might attain to the Resurrection
of the Dead, *Phil. iii. 11.* takes it from
 Eternal Happiness. *edit* *and as they are the*
glorious as they are the *the Jewels of the Foundation, the Crown*
For Beginning or Initial Life ever-
lasting is obtain'd upon Earth, and is an
earnest, a Pledge of that which is to come,
John vi. 24. He that heareth my Words
and believeth on him that sent me, hath
everlasting Life, and shall not come into
Condemnation, but is passed from Death
unto Life. An Entrance into a Right to
 Life Everlasting is there call'd by that Name.
 The intermediate is the less perfect State
 between Death and the Resurrection, when
 the just Soul only enjoys that Rest that re-
 mains for the People of God: the final is
 the

the perfect Bliss, conferr'd upon the Elect,
after that Benediction, *Come ye blessed of
my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepar'd
for you from the Foundation of the World.*

THAT Life is the immortal Union of
the Soul to the Body, and to God its highest
Life; in which Sense our Lord speaks, *He
that hath the Son, hath Life, and he that
hath not the Son, hath not Life.*

It is there that the Phoenix of a new
World rises from its Ashes: What the luxu-
riant Fancy of the Ancient Poets, or the
sublime Thought of the Platonic Philoso-
phers, has form'd on the future State, is ex-
cell'd. *Ovid's* Description of the Palace
of the Sun, and the Golden Age, is there
surpass'd. What *Sidonius Apollinaris* has
drawn of the Fortunate Islands, *Virgil* of
his Elysium, *Homer* of his Gardens of *Al-
cinous* and Palace of *Jove*, *Milton* of his
Paradise, or the several Sects of Wise and
Religious Men, in all Professions, convey-
ing often the same Notion under different
Images,

Images, is not only corrected, but exalted by the Discovery of that Divine Spirit, that knows the Things of God in the Scripture.

THE Word Heaven imports sometimes God, that dwelleth in Heaven, as *Luk. xv. 4. Was it from Heaven, or of Men?* that is, from God in Heaven. *Dan. iv. 26. The Heavens shall rule:* it implies also, the Air next to us, as *the Birds of Heaven, Matt. ix. 26.* An exceeding Heighth, as *Deut. i. 28. The Cities are wall'd up to Heaven;* the Place of the Sun, and the Stars, *Gen. i. 17.* The Place of the Winds, Clouds, and Dew, *Dan. vii. 2, 13.* and *iv. 12.* The Salvation and Blessedness above is call'd Heaven, *Rom. x. 6.* And the Seat of Angels and glorify'd Saints, *Matt. v. 19. Great is your Reward in Heaven.* The Heaven of Heavens is that which comprehends all the lower Orbs and Spheres under it.

AFTER the second Resurrection, a white Throne shall be erected in the Firmament,

ment, the Earth and Heaven that now appear, shall fly from the Face of him that shall sit upon it, and no Place shall be left for them. The Pavillion of the Sky, that Canopy which is the covering of our Tabernacle will be folded up as a Scroll, and depart away.

THEN shall a new Heaven and Earth be visible, and there shall be no more Sea: nothing changeable or turbulent shall have Place. The Ships of the Merchant from afar shall no longer divide his Breast with Hope and Fear, nor their own Lot in Winds and Storms. The Face of that boundless Climate shall be serene, its Air all Light, and *that* the Presence of God: the divine Sun-beam shall for ever clothe the whole Extent of that *Canaan*, it shall enter the very Souls of its Inhabitants, and diffuse a perpetual Spring of Life and Gladness.

No Uncertainty of the Seasons shall defeat the Health, ruffle the Peace, or marr the Labours of Man: Far thence shall be
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the Scythe of Time, far the Blast of Winter, the smiting Heat of an intemperate Sun, or the sickly Decay and Fall of the Year: the South-wind shall not strike with the Pestilence, nor the North chill with Palsies and Poverty. The Tranquillity shall be uniform, and the Peace beyond the Schemes of this World, unbroken, uninterrupted.

ON this side of the Grave Ease and Felicity are a Phantasm; each hopes to attain it in the Fruition of something at a Distance, some desir'd Enjoyment. Yet the very Noise, the Eagerness, the various Ways of chasing it, disturb it. The nearer we approach a present Blessing, its Lustre fades. Rude Crosses from abroad encounter it, and Care is a Cloud that buries it. How can there be Happiness where there is no Rest? The rich, great, powerful, and famous Man is only like a Vessel fraught with Gold, beaten with Tempests, doubtful of its Safety, at the Mercy of a thousand Chances; and nothing can inspire us with a more just Contempt of our
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present transitory Being, and infuse a stronger Wish of our heavenly Country, than to reflect, that the more we are engag'd in this World, it is the more troublesome; there is a Pain and Concern that encreases with the Attachment to it; whereas even here, the more disentangled we are from that, and bent on the Prospect of a better, the Content is improving, like a good Seed rising every Moment to a fruitful Harvest. When the new *Ston* is adorn'd and prepar'd, a Voice will be heard, *Behold, the Tabernacle of God is with Men; they shall be his People; God himself shall be with them, and be their God. He shall wipe away all Tears, and there shall be no more Death nor Sorrow. He shall dwell and appear with Men, as in the Tabernacle of Moses; this is a Cordial, a Balm to our present Anguish: That and its Causes shall sometime be banish'd; a firm Chearfulness shall possess the Soul, without Torment or Distraction, perfect as our heavenly Father is perfect.*

THIS *Sion* will have the Glory of God: He that made the Eye, shall he not see? He that fram'd the Sun, that beautify'd the Lilly and the Rose, that caus'd the Ruby and the Diamond to sparkle, that gave the Stars their shining, that sow'd the Coral Groves and Pearl in the Sea, that burnishes the Fruits of the Earth, and paints the mix'd Veins of it with glowing Metals; what is his Splendor? what his Glory? Ascend from the Effect to the Cause, and trace the consummate Light which none can approach, even in the present Glimmer of his Works, that are opening the Dusk to a Noon Day. Here the Sun is scorching, the Moon variable; without Annoyance or Alteration, the Light of Heaven is that of a Jasper, attending the immutable State of the joyous Mansion.

SAFE and magnificent are its Walls, tho' the Omnipotence of God is its Bulwark against Offence and Danger: Twelve Gates for Access from the *Jews* and *Gentiles*, to sit down with *Abram* and the Patriarchs,

triarchs, in that Kingdom; for the General Assembly of the First-born, written in the Book of Life; for the Collective Body of the Church Triumphant, from all Kindreds and People, Tongues and Languages. The Names of the Apostles inscrib'd on the Foundations, Jesus Christ himself being the head Corner-stone; the Order and Strength of the Place intitle it a City; the Compass of it great, its quiet *Salem*: It was measur'd by a golden Reed, transcendant to its former Rule: The Church below is unequal in Purity; that above, in length, heighth, and breadth, is regular, nothing disproportion'd; all will endure the measuring Reed, and abide the most exact Tryal.

GOLD will be the Pavement; Objects upon Earth the most valu'd will there be trod upon; the most precious Mineral will cover the Streets, durable and incorrupt, to shew a Satisfaction above the Riches of this World, and the utmost Gratification of the Senses.

No Temple is there, but the Lord God and the Lamb; the Knowledge is perfect; the Faith lost in Vision; there is the Oyl of Joy for Mourning, and the Garment of Praise for the Spirit of Heaviness. Where the God of Grace resides, its Aids are useless; where he is all in all, the Sun, the common Succours of Nature, are superfluous.

THE Kings of the Earth will bring their Glory and Honour into that City; not that the Distinction of King and Subject will there prevail, but there will be their lasting Crown; there will flourish the true Power and Majesty of Nations, in the Sight and Favour of the first Potentate. The Gates shall not be shut by Day; no hostile Invasion, no Insult of Enemies, by Force or Fraud, can approach it; and no Night shall intervene; where there is Eternal Rest; no Shade, no Gloom of Sadness, or Fear, shall break in upon the blissful Mansion.

A pure River of living Water, clear as Chrystal, will flow from the Throne, denoting the Rivers of Pleasure at God's Right-Hand for evermore: The Well of Life becomes a Stream, not to be cut off or diverted, proceeding from the Throne; like that it will never fail: The solid Woes, and embitter'd Delights of this Life will be succeeded by a sure and endless Consolation.

ON either side will Bloom those Trees, whose Leaves are for healing of the Nations, even in the dark Months of Sickness and Death. Not that Meat or Medecine will be there Requisite, but the Divine Fulness will distribute it self to the Satisfaction of his People, and preserve it undecay'd to Eternity.

THE Face of God and the Lamb shall be seen by his Servants; the Light of whose Countenance here is our Support: His Name shall be on their Foreheads, they will be declar'd, and stand confess'd as the Heirs of his Kingdom, as Holiness to the Lord

Word was written on the Frontlet of the High Priest, and they shall Reign for ever. When we are dejected by Sin and Sorrow, Trouble and Temptation, let it enliven our Spirits, that we are advancing to the final Sabbath, in the City of our Solemnities, a quiet Habitation, a Tabernacle that shall not be taken down; not one of its Stakes shall be remov'd, nor its Cords broken.

There shall the Jewels be bound up, and the Wheat be gather'd into the Garner, among those who are taken away from the Evil to come, and the Friends that are gone thither before us; for the Crown of Honour, the Harp of Praise, the Robe of Immortality, and the Palm of Triumph.

THERE is no Sighing nor Lamentation heard, the Gall of Bitterness is not mingled in the Sincere Cup; there is the Absence of Evil, the Presence of all Good, and the Wish of David is fulfill'd, *Psal. lxxxiv.*
34. Blessed are they that dwell in thy House, they shall be always praising thee.
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The Unworthy shall not be permitted to abide; none shall be ensnared by the Flattery of Speech, or the Deceit of Appearance. The Inferior shall not envy, nor the Superior oppress; there is no To-morrow, nor its Anxiety; to Day is ever present: no Anger, or Defeat; they shall be abundantly satisfied with the Plenty of thy House; with thee is the Fountain of Life, the Flower and Grace of Health, and perpetual Exultation.

AND this Comfort is to be drawn from the Shortness of Life, that it may obtain a boundless Felicity; *I have Compassion on the Multitude*, says our Lord; because they have been now with me three Days and have nothing to eat: much more will his Regard extend in Eternity: the least Service is precious in his Sight; he puts our Tears in the Bottle of his Remembrance; himself is our Debtor; tho' we here flourish only to wither, yet we dye to live; that we may trust in God for ever, for only in the Lord *Jehovah* is everlasting Strength; that

that we may behold his Face in Righteousness; and when we awake up after his Likeness, may be satisfy'd with it.

LENGTH and Happiness of Life is the Complement of our Desires; there alone shall we be never cast out of its Possession: That is the Fruit of the Vine promis'd at the Marriage-Table of the Lamb, to convince us, that in the Eucharistical Body and Blood of Christ it is a Foretaste of heavenly Hospitality, when the King shall come in to see his Guests, and his House shall be fill'd: He is the Bread and Water of Life; here the Greatest are ever needy; Abundance and Plenty are Want, because never satisfying; and the rich Man in the Gospel was only a more stately Beggar than poor *Lazarus*.

THERE is no Loss or Labour, no Calamity or Discontent; there is the Invitation of the Prophet verified, to come to the Waters and buy without Money, and without Price: To behold our Lord, and have

have Fellowship with the Worthies of old, from the Beginning of the World, deserves our Watching and our Assiduity : to be free from Weariness and Pain, Murmur and Clamour, Grief and Infirmity ; for this to mourn now is to have Joy hereafter, and the Day of Death is better than the Day of Birth. *Asker* had the choicest Blessing of the Twelve Tribes from *Moses*, *The Eternal God is thy Refuge, and underneath are the Everlasting Arms.* Deut. xxxiii.

Thus the Religion of a Christian is his Interest, too substantial to be wrested from Him : it is his Recompence, Sure, Sufficient, and Eternal, when all the Return of the World and Unbelief is uncertain, defective, and perishing.

THE World is doubtful ; but, says St. Paul, *I know whom I have believ'd, and am sure he will keep it till that Day : Henceforth is laid up for me a Crown of Righteousness.* We are not sure of the

World, but no Merit is lost in the Sight of God. Here our Endeavours, tho' meritorious, may be unknown, tho' known, may be disagreeable ; tho' pleasing, may not be answer'd.

BUT from the Eye of Heaven the most obscure, the very Intention, the Desire, the smallest Actions, are not cover'd, and the Return is proportion'd ; a Source of Consolation to the Humble, the Weak, the Indigent, and the Faithful.

HERE are Piques and Jealousies, the Heart may be alienated, or the Views opposite : In God, those Imperfections have no place ; here there may be want of Power ; He is infinite : whence *David*, who knew the Hearts and Abilities of the Powerful, avow'd, *It is better to trust in the Lord, than to put any Confidence in Princes.*

IN serving the World we have much travel, and very unequal Fruit of it ; empty

ty and mortifying are its Returns : Are the Wealthy and the Great contented ? Do they not ever frame new Desires, since no Object here can fill the Heart ? the Ambitious struggle for a corruptible Crown ; Fortunes the most ample ; the most firmly establish'd are attack'd, and have and do fall daily : Death at last cuts off the glittering Pageant. Could some among the first Rank of Men have foreseen what would have happen'd to themselves and their Posterity, they would have been rather employ'd in building their costly Palaces with their own Hands, than amassing Power and Wealth to enrich them.

ON the contrary, all the Sufferings of this World are not equal to the Glory that shall be reveal'd ; God is a stable Possession : We see poor Men, dead to the World, chearful in their Abasement ; happy even here in their Devotion to God, (the Heart never tasting the highest Complacency till vain Pleasures are banish'd from it,) much more will be the future Bliss : That Faith is

the Victory that triumphs over the World, outbids its fairest Proposals, and catches up the Attention with *St. Paul* in the Third Heaven.

The Royal Guard of Angels, the noble Army of Martyrs, the glorious Company of the Apostles and Prophets, the Son of Man, invested with that Glory which he had before the Foundation of the World, is the Treasure, the Fulness of the Beatitude, when we are call'd from this Veil of Darknes to the Portals of that fortunate City, our Country above, our Eternal Home.

As a Drop to the Ocean, or a Grain of Dust to the Globe, such is the utmost Pomp on Earth to the meanest Degree in the Courts of God. On Earth, our utmost Knowledge is very imperfect and anxious: we fly from Sense to Fancy, from Imagination to Judgment. In a State of Perfection all these Deficiencies and Perplexities are remov'd; hence it was that an aged Her-

Hermit sang a Psalm on his Death-bed, declaring his Reason, that he saw the Wall tottering that hinder'd his Sight of God, the Fountain and Mirror of Knowledge.

HERE the Inclinations jar : what is pleasing and noble to one, is mean and insupportable to another : the Busy have no Taste for the Search of Truth ; the Covetous no Relish for the Pleasures of Charity ; a Coward wonders at the History of *Edward III.* and *Henry V.* a worldly Mind does not comprehend the Joy of Devotion ; *there* the Passions are directed by the most illuminated Sense, and that enlarg'd by the beatific Vision. Thus the wrong Habits and Defects of our Faculties hinder us from conceiving what are the Pleasures of the Blessed.

YET let us repair this Disadvantage by representing to our selves the great Character of *St. Paul*, who saw in that Paradise, the many Mansions of our Father's House : the Thousands about the Throne ; who heard the *Hallelujah* ; the Hymns of the
Twenty-

Twenty-four Elders; and the Seraphims crying, Thrice Holy is the Lord of Sabaoth. Yet snatch'd away into this Valley of Tears, and crying like *Elijah*, where is the Chariot of *Israel*, and the Horse-Man thereof?

LET this engage us to compare the Vanity and Dissatisfaction of the World, with the Promises of God, the Excellency of our Souls, and the Dignity of our Original; to say, *Our Feet shall stand in thy Gates, O Jerusalem*; it is our Desire to depart, and to be with Christ, to be admitted into the most Holy Place, after we have sacrific'd long in the Courts of the Tabernacle: Be this our Prayer and Meditation, that we may finish our Course with Joy, that we may come to Mount *Sion*, and the Kingdom that cannot be mov'd where we shall be Fellow-Citizens with the Saints and the Household of God.

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